

THE

# FRONTIER



A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

EDITED BY  
PHILIP MAIRET AND ALEC VIDLER

FEBRUARY 1950

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THE VILLAGE  
COMMUNITY

•  
'COSMO'

•  
INDUSTRY TO-DAY

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J. Middleton Murry  
John Baillie, C. H. Sisson  
A. P. Forrester-Paton

BASIL BLACKWELL • OXFORD



# *The Frontier*

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# CONTENTS

|                                    |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| NOTES OF THE MONTH                 | - | - | - | - | - | 43 |
| INTERIM                            | - | - | - | - | - | 52 |
| THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY              | - | - | - | - | - | 55 |
| By John Middleton Murry            |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| "COSMO"                            | - | - | - | - | - | 65 |
| By John Baillie                    |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| HUMAN RELATIONS IN INDUSTRY TO-DAY | - | - | - | - | - | 70 |
| By A. P. Forrester-Paton           |   |   |   |   |   |    |
| INDUSTRY AND HUMANISM              | - | - | - | - | - | 78 |
| By C. H. Sisson                    |   |   |   |   |   |    |

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY was born in 1889. He has written some forty volumes, mainly of literary or social criticism, which he believes to be constructive. He edited *The Athenaeum* during its last years as an independent literary journal, and *The Adelphi* from 1923 to 1948. Since 1941 he has been occupied with a co-operative farm.

JOHN BAILLIE, D.LITT., D.D., LL.D., Professor of Divinity at Edinburgh University, was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland 1943-44, is a Chaplain to the King, and is author of *Our Knowledge of God* and other eminent works of theology.

A. P. FORRESTER-PATON is Personnel Manager at Patons and Baldwins Ltd., Darlington.

C. H. SISSON is a civil servant in a central department ; has written numerous articles on political theory and other matters.



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## Notes of the Month

AS the general election draws near, it becomes apparent that there is one issue upon which each side is most anxious to outshine the other. That issue is the provision of employment. Competitors for electoral favour are eager above all to convince the voting public that they, and not their rivals, have the policy that will ensure the most jobs and the least unemployment. Actually there is no reason to doubt that either party in power would try to maintain as much gainful employment as possible, but they have different ideas about the best way of achieving that end. The total amount of employment, in work that raises the standard of living, depends largely upon the amount and value of this nation's employment by other nations, which is always being modified by world-economic changes that are hard to foresee and beyond the power of any one government to regulate. But governments can do much to even out the work, to make work and to distribute incomes, and, though this may not increase the nation's distributable wealth and, if badly done, could easily lessen it, the party that stands first and foremost for governmental control and regulation has this semblance of advantage upon the question of unemployment. That is not the only issue of this election, and no one knows if it will be a decisive one. But nearly all political experts seem to have concluded that large numbers

of the electorate regard the provision of employment as the supreme qualification for their favour ; they fear unemployment so much that they are sure to vote for the side they think the likelier to keep them in work.

### *The Dominant Issue*

Important as employment has always been, this political predominance of it is new. It began after the first world war and was established during the mass unemployment of the great slump of 1929 and the early 'thirties, the memory of which is a bitter tradition even to a later generation which has known hardly any real unemployment. In the thirties the average condition of the unemployed was actually kept higher above subsistence level than it had ever been before 1914, for this was a period of great advance in social services ; but if the unemployed were less destitute, they were more deeply stricken. The emotional horror of unemployment created by that experience, which makes it still a burning social and political issue, is misunderstood if assessed only by the material conditions that caused it : it spread far beyond those directly affected and created in all kinds of people a sense of shame, something like a conviction of social sin. The extent to which better intentions, without a much better understanding of our dilemma, could have solved the problem is often overestimated, and the efforts which in fact were made are undervalued. The persisting dread of unemployment, however, is due less to an economic fear than to a spiritual insecurity ; a crisis in the self-consciousness of a society which feels itself being transformed, from top to bottom, by the new technology.

### *Technics and Social Transformation*

Few even yet realize the importance of the new technics that have developed since the century began. Discussing it in a recent series of articles in *Harper's Magazine*, Mr. Peter Drucker says that " in retrospect, the typical factory of 1910 seems to have been closer to its great-grandfather, the

artisan's workshop, than to its son, the modern mass-production plant". What has emerged in the last fifty years is more than a further extension of the use and elaboration of the power of machines. It is a new principle, first fully acted upon in the greatest industries of Germany and America, but now extending into every kind of production and altering the methods of many smaller industries. It is applicable to almost any human activity, for it consists primarily in the large-scale organization of human actions as means to the same end. Its pattern is seen also in the great operations of modern war, which have hastened the new development and helped to shape it. Such an undertaking as the recent invasion of Normandy is first planned as a whole, then analysed and "broken down" into all its component operations, until every unit's part in it is clearly defined. And a typical case of modern production, a new aircraft, ship or even a cinema film, is similarly organized in advance by a hierarchy of experts. This is a change of immense social consequence; a second and perhaps more powerfully transforming force than the previous "industrial revolution".

### *The "Operative's" Psychology*

The effect upon the person at work is also different: much that has been said and written about the workers' "subordination to the machine" seems out of date. Modern production may not, on balance, deprive men of skill; it does away with many traditional and acquired skills, but it also abolishes more merely repetitive labour than it creates; it demands the acquirement of new skills by innumerable people. More significant, so far as the worker is concerned, is the reversal of the direction of his attention, from the thing he is making to the way he is making it. He contributes only an "operation", sometimes a highly skilled one, but one of many which are being combined by experts he may never see, to an end which they design and he need not even know. Thus he feels his activity as something related



much less to its end than to his co-workers and the economic institution in which he functions. The pre-industrial, and also the earlier industrial workers, grouped mostly in smaller, more personal associations and in closer contact with the design and purpose of the job, were better planted on the earth, less specialized and more able to take even recurrent unemployments as among the shocks of life that one had to absorb. To the typical modern "operative", his acquired skill is frequently useless unless it is geared into some large organization. Unemployed, he is far more forlorn, almost an outcast. Monotonous and regimented though it may be, his employment now feels even more indispensable to him. The importance of his working life, compared with what we call his "private life", is symbolized, in typically up-to-date cases, by the spacious, clean, almost palatial factory in contrast with the dingy streets of crowded houses where the workers in the older industrial areas live. Can we wonder that, in the mass, they take so much less interest in legal or political liberties, so much more in security of employment? Or that no government can really trust to "natural adjustment" to achieve the economic "recovery" of which our need is now chronic? Whatever social ideals it may have, any modern government resorts to more or less control and regulation if it believes they will keep unemployment at bay.

### *The Party System*

Each of the political parties is, at its best, trying to preserve or achieve what its own members regard as the most important values, in a society whose institutions are all being altered by non-political forces. The revolution in technics, which is breaking the old order faster than we can devise a new one, creates problems which the parties see differently, but they are the same problems. That is why, as many have remarked, our parties now produce programmes that are partly similar, and opposing leaders, when they get to office, tend to adopt measures which come to much the same in practice. The social order is threatened



at so many points by massive pressures, and the protective or remedial action that is called for has to be referred to the experts, who are a class with much the same stock of information and practical ideas. This is not to say that the different spirit in which different governments legislate does not produce essentially different effects. Only a perverse cynic could think that our party system merely offers two roads to the same ends, or that electoral decisions are unimportant. The national decision always determines, for good or ill, much of our own future and of the course of history ; and to help in making it, by voting according to conscience (allowing for the rare case of conscientiously objecting to vote) is a social obligation. The two-party system, which both the British and the American peoples have so instinctively adopted and maintained (for nothing in their Constitutions compelled them to it) is, for all its limitations and abuses, the best means yet contrived for basing responsible government upon universal franchise. It is a Christian interest that it should be kept up by use, both for this reason and because it has a foundation in human nature. The two main parties are so large that they always include wide varieties of thought and purpose, but they derive their unity of feeling from the fact that they correspond to natural oppositions of temperament, of self-interest and of notions about the ideal form of society.

A party victory may thus seem to be, more clearly than it is anything else, an emotional decision ; but emotion has its place in policy and does not at all necessarily exclude intelligence. Elections authorize governments to proceed, now with more haste, now with more caution, according to the temper of the people and the national circumstances ; and surely nothing could be better for a nation's political intelligence than to see its moods, progressive or conservative, worked out in responsible action. Nor could anything be better calculated to moderate political passions than a system which, whenever more than half the people are dissatisfied with the government, enables them to overthrow and re-

place it, in a demonstrative but peaceable manner, with something of the exhilaration of a successful revolution.

### *A Momentous Decision*

At the same time, independent members, or a "third party" such as the Liberals provide, may have a value apart from the distinctive contribution they may make in debates or divisions. For the two-party system must be voluntary to be healthy: the exclusion or disappearance of third alternatives would probably lead to more formal and introverted kind of conflict between the two main parties, whose internal discipline tends already, in the opinion of many, to weaken the contact between Parliament and the feeling of the country. Whether this is true or not, the tension between conservatives and progressives in general is a psychological necessity for our type of democracy, and gives it a working basis precisely because it arises naturally, a rule that is proved by exceptions to it. There is little danger, either here or in the U.S.A., of parliament becoming a congeries of the small, irresponsible parties which have so often weakened democratic government elsewhere. We have rather the opposite danger, of the political profession becoming specialized into a new ruling class, partly because of the enormous legislative activity to which it is compelled by the crisis in our economy. The administrative demands that this makes upon members of Parliament exceed anything known in previous generations. Social change has been forcing the pace of law-making, as much as legislation is altering society. The essential argument between the main parties since the present government was elected, has been about its extension of government control and regulation, whether this has gone beyond what is necessary. This is a straight issue between the conservative and radical attitudes in their simplest form, and the clearest result of the present election will be to show whether the country as a whole is in favour of sustaining the pace of legislation towards a Socialist State or of going back in order to overhaul and in some

cases consolidate the changes that have been made. This, in itself, could be a very momentous decision.

### *The Duty of Moderation*

The election confronting us this month will no doubt be fought with passionate zeal. Political battles are real struggles about power ; they can and frequently do engender embittered dispute between people who know that they are in agreement upon more ultimate realities, who have even profound and religious convictions in common. No one ought, for that reason, to evade any duty he owes to the cause or party of his allegiance ; but it is also a Christian duty to moderate the passions and defend the decencies of the contest, as well as to raise the level of debate, by every means in one's power. Politics is the art of organizing the power-relations in society according to the principles of justice, and, in this age when material science has increased the powers that men wield almost beyond imagination, it is not surprising that party politics have acquired perhaps dangerous importance. The direct action of government has been extended from the political into every other department of life, from the family and private property to education and recreation. This supremacy of politics has sprung from attempts to exploit and also to regulate the vast powers that men have acquired, powers that were gained by other than political means and with quite different ends in view. Politics will not, however, be put into their rightful place and subordinated to justice by the intensification of the political struggle, but on the contrary, only by fostering and strengthening the social realities which are now subjected to government because they are weak and depend on its support. The things that Christians are specially concerned to see established in their own right, the social institutions which express the true nature of men acting in voluntary association, now demand of them a great deal of positive and progressive as well as defensive action. Much of it must be political, but of this their support of the parties at elections



is usually a minor part. Moreover, their voting power is distributed amongst all the parties, none of which wholly expresses their aims. Their presence in all parties should, however, help not only to curb excesses but to preserve the true spirit of democracy; the readiness to accept loyally a majority decision and to keep the rules of the competition; without which the parliamentary system would soon lose its value, and even its existence.

### *Adaptive Measures*

We have emphasized the limitations of politics in the partisan sense. The thing that is transforming the societies of men goes on doing so, under socialist, capitalist or communist systems of government. But there are other spheres of social action, in which its challenge can be more directly met. Any successful attempts made to adapt technics to the worker without forfeiting efficiency, take place on non-political levels. Where we see workers being carefully trained to understand the whole process to which each contributes a very small part, something is being done to link their tasks, at least intellectually and imaginatively, to purposes worthier of a whole human being's attention. Long ago, it was the spontaneous and bitterly opposed growth of the workers' organizations, before they became directly political, which made some new sense of community possible for masses whose pre-industrial society had been disrupted. Even the impact of the new order upon the family, which it deprived of its primordial basis as an economic unit, was first countered by the heavy Victorian emphasis on family morale and then softened by measures of practical help and protection. These and other palliatives, to which Christian social action contributed important, often leading motives, have enabled the Western communities, in which power-industry began, to shore up much of their social structure against the industrial gale. They had time, because the change grew upon them gradually. In the new, intensified phase of mass-productive technics, a similarly

quickened response both of conscience and consciousness, is demanded of us. We have only to look at Africa and the East, where there has often been no time—where some societies of primitive tribal structure have been exposed to the blast of fully developed technocratic enterprise without an intermediate stage—to realize the importance both of time for adaptation, and of the conscience to take advantage of it.

### *An Ultimate Question*

There is no apparent possibility that the spread of technics over the world, nor the raising of it to a higher power in some countries, will be arrested for perhaps an age to come. Nor is the pace likely to be sensibly moderated by national or international policy, which tends rather to increase it. In so far as the new powers, so advantageous practically but socially so destructive, can be absorbed, modified and conditioned to human ends, it must be mainly through the agency of ordinary people in their own fields of action. The new organizing and technical principles are being introduced into every walk of life; we have to deal with them in commerce, industry, clerical work, even in the arts and in politics; and in every case we have to respond rightly to the risk of dehumanizing consequences or to let these proceed by default. Initiative is almost always better than defensive or evasive action; we need to be resourceful in alternatives. In some cases there are spontaneous movements in a locality, to reaffirm its human values in a new way, which should command our support. An instance of this kind is given in Mr. Middleton Murry's article on "The Village Community" which we print on a later page. But the fundamental question of our age, which is whether the technocratic tendency of our civilization is compatible with human relations acceptable to the Christian conscience—this is being answered in the biggest units of industry, where men as workers are wholly exposed to the discipline of a mechanical order. Few who are outside industry have

much knowledge of the mentalities that prevail within it, or of the efforts of those who, in the workshop itself, are trying to devise means towards new industrial relations, in which every worker should have, and feel he has, a share in the rights and responsibilities of management. This is discussed from first-hand knowledge, by Mr. A. P. Forrester-Paton in our present number, and we need hardly emphasize the central importance of his subject. Politics are very important, but it is upon the industrial front, in the works themselves, that the issue between man and the latest creation of his spirit, power-technics, will be ultimately settled.

## INTERIM

A GOOD deal of advice has come to the editors recommending certain topics for treatment in *The Frontier*. Under the above heading we shall take notice, so far as possible, of such communications or of the happenings to which they refer. Usually these will present questions which the editors intend, when space and resources permit, to deal with at greater length.

### The Crisis in Education

Is the expansion of our educational system accompanied by a serious decline in the value of the service it renders? The fear of this is often expressed, and was strongly in evidence at a recent meeting of the Headmasters' Association at the County Hall, London, to which a correspondent urges our attention. Mr. Woolley, the Educational Secretary of the Oxford Appointments Committee, said that teaching was ceasing to be a learned profession, and that its members were becoming a depressed class; whilst other speakers agreed in deploring the inadequacy of new entrants to their profession both in numbers and vocational aptitude. The fact that teachers' salaries had risen far less than their living expenses and placed them, on the average, well below the artisan class, was only one aspect of a change which was subjecting their calling to "the regulation and regimentation which were becoming more and more . . . destructive of the very qualities which the schools exist to promote". We must recognize that the best social services created in the past can hardly be made available to



all without an at least temporary decline in their quality, and indeed some change in their very character. That this should be the case both in education and medicine is not surprising, but we have not yet a sufficiently precise knowledge of what is happening, or to what new problems we are escaping from our previous anxieties. Observations made by special groups, such as the Headmasters' Association, must not be mistaken for the whole picture, but they furnish interim reports of first-hand and expert value : and, up to the present, are disquieting.

. . . . .

An instructive contribution to the educational question from the standpoint of the Universities is to be read in the current *Cambridge Journal* (Bowes & Bowes, 3s. od.). This is Sir Walter Moberly's reply to an attack made by the *Cambridge Journal's* Editor upon his book, *The Crisis in the University*, last June.

### Psychiatry and Crime

The adaptation of the law to advances in psychiatric knowledge cannot go far beyond public, as well as legal, opinion. This has just been demonstrated again by discussion of the grounds for reprieve in cases of capital crime, not only in the Royal Commission on the subject, but in the press comments upon a case of murder which had exhibited peculiar abnormality of motive, and for which a reprieve on psychiatric grounds had been refused. Those who know most about the bearing of psychological knowledge upon criminal problems are the most perturbed at the inadequacy of the present legal position. The rest of us do well to remember that no Christian country had a more fiercely punitive legal code than ours till a century ago, when the abolition of hanging for quite trivial crimes was passionately resisted by religious officialdom, which displayed a merely primitive and self-protective notion of criminal justice. This humiliating record should predispose us to self-criticism in considering the much more difficult question of the place of psychiatry in treatment of the criminal.

An initial prejudice against the new knowledge is that modern psychiatry is based upon an aspect of the criminal which refers much of his behaviour to sub-personal (or inter-personal) forces : it is therefore feared as an at least partial denial of his freedom and responsibility as a moral agent. In reality it does not reduce but spreads the responsibility to the psychiatrists, lawyers, society in general ; it tends ultimately, towards that Christian insight into human responsibility where the operation of " the law " is transcended, and

we are in fact more responsible for one another than for ourselves, a realization that is bearable only by the grace of God. Meanwhile it remains true that whilst all the new knowledge we acquire deepens our responsibility, it can equip us with greater means to discharge it. Of the use of the new psychiatry in administering justice we as yet know little; but we have every reason to try to find out more.

### **The Salzburg Conference**

Germany's vast refugee problem was never clearly stated, nor were adequate proposals framed to solve it, until the Conference at Hamburg in February of last year. This conference was convened and carried through by the World Council of Churches and its recommendations have influenced all the successful attempts since made to remedy this refugee problem.

The Salzburg Conference of January 17-19 (whose reports will arrive just too late for comment here) was convened by the World Council of Churches to deal similarly with the refugee problem in Austria; the two essential differences are, that this time the work has the full co-operation of the Roman Catholic Church and that the main problem is that of the Volksdeutsche—300,000 refugees of German origin now dependent upon Austria's own population of only six millions.

### **Mental Hearing**

A correspondent writing from New York sends us the prospectus of "a course of lessons in listening"—not to the radio, whose auditors get plenty of good advice, but to one another. Our correspondent thinks that low grade listening is a main cause of "the growing gulf between those who carry responsibility for the work of the world and the professionals who should be guiding their hands". Neither side, he says, properly attends to what the other is saying. Most of us have noticed, in some conversation or other, that the other fellow has evidently missed the point of our argument because he was already thinking out his own next observation, or even reflecting upon his last . . . or is it possible that we ever did the same ourselves? The suggestion that it should be a concern of *The Frontier* to seek to correct this by special courses of training, we pass on to our psychologists for whatever action they can recommend. It is a common symptom of perhaps a deeper trouble. Good listening—we would go further and say *hearing*—is a faculty needing protection and cultivation; what is in question here is really a disposition of mind, and deafness is no disability.

## THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

IT was the end of an epoch in our village when it ceased to possess a resident parson, a year or two ago. One understands and accepts the economic impossibility. The big rectory was built in the days when in East Anglia the tithe of corn alone brought in the income of a gentleman, and it was maintained, in later days, by the general opulence of nineteenth-century England, when the Church gave the dignity of the clerical profession to innumerable sons of the risen middle-class, and the wealth of their fathers provided them with a settled income to sustain it. How frequent and how vivid are village-memories of the wealthy parson of the 1880's and the 1890's—often the builder of a row of new and better cottages which, though marked by the architectural insecurity of their time, nevertheless betokened a new attitude of social responsibility!

The downfall of the English middle class has set a wide and deep gulf between those days and these. The steady stream of its sons, with private incomes supplied by hard-headed fathers willing to pay for the establishment of their sons in the ranks of acknowledged gentility, dwindled and finally dried up after 1914. The ample margin out of which the middle-class had nourished the country clergy disappeared. The great house became a sheer incubus to the new parson, who had only his stipend to live on. The amalgamation of country parishes was necessary, in order to provide the parson with a living wage. In the abandoned parishes, there was a vacuum at the centre, where there had been an authority for hundreds of years. Parson is *the* person of the village.

It is tempting to say that, if the Church had still been a vital religious and social institution, felt as necessary by the villagers, they would have set themselves to repair the damage, and by their own contributions made it possible for a parson to dwell among them. This, of course, is true: but it is an abstract truth. It leaves out of account the fact



that the peculiar social authority of the English parson was due less to his priesthood than to his membership of a superior social class. A parish priest who was largely maintained by the contributions of his flock could not inherit the peculiar *mana* that attached to the English country parson. The position of the Roman Catholic parish priest, who is generally so maintained, affords an illuminating comparison. He wields far more specifically religious authority than the English country parson ever did—at least since the Reformation—but of his social authority little or none. The social authority of the English parson derived from his being a liberally educated English gentleman. It was only after studying the humanities at Oxford or Cambridge or Dublin, that he became a clergyman—"a clerk in holy orders". That is to say, he was first, and primarily, a member of what Coleridge called the "clerisy"—the class of "clerks", or educated men; and only secondarily a priest, in the sense of a *sacerdos*. This was the peculiar English contribution to the development of the full Catholic tradition. From the point of view of religious orthodoxy, it represented a secularization of religion: from another point of view, it represented a spiritualization of the secular. In every parish a liberally educated gentleman was in a position of authority, and not a priest trained in a seminary. When Hurrell Froude, in his youthful Tractarian zeal, proclaimed that it was essential to the revolution he desired in the Church of England, that a priest should no longer be required to be a gentleman, he was (as he knew) putting his axe to the roots of the stately tree.

Nowadays, owing to the decline of the English middle-class, probably the majority of the parsons, spread thinly over the English country, are seminary-trained. Since the Church of England is concerned, it is not the same thing as the seminary training of the Roman Catholic priest, but neither is it the same thing as the old liberal education in the humanities. The villagers are aware of the change. Being a gentleman and having had a liberal education were to them

complementary parts of the same idea, which was realized in the parson. They may have only the foggiest notion of what a liberal education is ; but they can recognize its fruits. The fruits of the different tree are not the same.

The change that has occurred is important, and is complex. It has deprived a host of villages of the possibility of having a resident parson at all. The same economic and social revolution which underlies the change has brought with it a superficial mass education, and a growing apathy towards religion, so that it is not possible to supply a parson of a new type in every village by enlisting the financial support of the villagers. Even if it were possible it is doubtful whether it would be a good thing, for the strength and influence of the parson depended upon his being completely independent. It requires the absolute spiritual authority which descends to the Roman Catholic priest from the Pope to prevent a parish priest who is supported by his congregation from being at the mercy of it.

Thus, in an increasing number of villages, owing to the absence of a resident parson, there is a vacuum where the central authority used to be. In those which still possess one, he is a different kind of man who, through no fault of his own, fills uneasily and inadequately the traditional rôle of leader and law-giver to the village-community.

I do not believe that the village-community is going to fall to pieces because of this. But there is no doubt that it is a trying time for the village. It is a period of radical transformation. It is superficial to suppose that the remedy can or will be found by any reorganization of the clergy. The impoverishment of the country as a whole by two exhausting wars and the burden of military preparation, its decline from its position of economic privilege, the destruction of the ample economic margin out of which the middle-class financed the Church in the countryside, the vast redistribution of the national wealth that has followed the advent of the working-class to political power, the rise in the status and wages of the farm-worker relative to the rest of the com-

munity—these together constitute a change so fundamental that the position and prestige of the Church in the countryside can never be restored, even if we leave out of the account the general decay of Christian belief. Country folk no longer believe in the Christian religion in the old way. Nine out of ten villagers never enter the Church at all, except for a marriage or a funeral; and the general attitude towards it is one of rather pitying affection, as towards an old and decrepit relation.

What stands fast in the English countryside to-day? Primarily, and almost solely, the duty towards the land. I use the word duty, because the relation, though essentially one of economic necessity, has more in it than that. There is a quasi-religious overtone. Probably it derives from the instinctive sense that work on the land is necessary to the life of man in a way that no other work can be. For all the staggering superstructure of modern industrial civilization, agriculture remains man's work par excellence, and it is less completely subject to the human will than other more characteristic kinds of work. The landworker and the farmer are more continually aware than others of the truth in the saying that Man proposes, God disposes. This realization comes to others chiefly in consequence of some personal frustration or disaster; it is knit into the texture of the daily occupation of countrymen. Their dreams for the future, their plans for the day, are subject incessantly to the acknowledgment: "A greater power than we denies all this." Because of this, tradition is more living and powerful in the countryside than elsewhere. Though the contribution of science to modern agriculture is great and increasing, there is still a large territory where exact knowledge is impossible, or unachieved, and men must act by instinct, or intuition, or by traditional rule based on long generations of experience.

Furthermore, it is not probable that there will be any vast reorganization of our farming system such as would permit or compel the desertion of our villages and the gathering of



their inhabitants into new townships, bristling with urban amenities. This is sometimes advocated; but it is surely doctrinaire and unrealistic. If English agriculture is to make its full contribution in the struggle for national existence which henceforward confronts us, it must be through a steady increase in livestock production, and the increase of home-grown feeding-stuffs on which it depends. It is worse than Utopian to imagine that the herdsman, the stockman, the shepherd can safely live a few miles away from the animals they tend. Of the men who are not actually held in position by the needs of the livestock, the majority would prefer to live near the farm than far away. Short of a violent and foolhardy revolution in the whole pattern of English farming, the village will remain, because it is necessary to the efficient working of the land.

The problem is to give the village a new centre of authority and vitality, or rather to induce it to grow one. The old hierarchical order is gone, or decaying fast. It would be idle to prophesy what will replace it, because it was so complex. You cannot replace something which grew up imperceptibly and has now fallen into decay with some new ideal or arbitrary pattern. You must look for signs of a new growth and try to foster them. One of the most conspicuous and impressive signs of new growth in the villages is the desire for a village-hall, and the willingness to work together to get one. As I interpret it, this corresponds, in the changed circumstances of the time, to the communal impulse which first built the village-churches themselves—churches which, when the religious sentiment was more healthy and comprehensive than it is to-day, served equally well as barns, store-houses, strongholds and theatres, and as homes for the mystery of religion. The contemporary movement for village-halls is the reassertion of the will to community when it can no longer be satisfied by a Church, most of whose secular functions have been taken over by the State.

Even at the cost of appearing over-subtle, I will insist that this growing demand for a village-hall should not be super-

ficially interpreted. It arises, of course, from the felt need to occupy the new leisure which the improved conditions of work on the land have brought to the village. Up to quite recent days, what leisure there was could be occupied at the village inn. The increase of leisure and the prohibitive price of beer work together: and these causes would be enough to satisfy the materialist. But, again, there is more in it than that. When you take a hand in the movement, you are impressed by the evident longing of the village to be working together for something; sometimes you are even tempted to wonder whether the pleasure of working together in the effort to get the hall may not be greater than the satisfaction of having got it. Yet again there enter into the desire a whole train of simple and unspoken aspirations towards education and culture. A whole group of people is thinking of the delight of putting on plays in conditions which are no longer primitive; another few look forward to lectures and discussions on the job of agriculture itself; yet another hopes for a debating society. These are certainly not more important to the villagers than the "socials", the dances and whist-drives which will be held in the hall. There is no reason why they should be. But they are not less important. The truth is that the desire for a village-hall is the desire of the village to express itself as a community, warts and all—with its ordinary enjoyments and its extraordinary aspirations.

It will be lamentable-indeed if the Government, in search of economies, instructs the Ministry of Education to withhold its subsidies for village-halls; or, in order to curtail the building work that is being done, directs that licences for them shall be refused. To a certain type of Socialist there is an inherent superiority in a service bestowed entirely by the State; and he would look more benevolently on village-halls which were non-contributory. But more than half the virtue of the village-hall lies in the sacrifice and sociality engendered by the effort to get it, and that, in its turn, is by far the best guarantee that good use will be made of it

and good care taken of it. The present system is excellent by which the Ministry of Education will make a grant of a little over half the cost for a village-hall that is well-built and properly administered. Nobody wants more help from the Government than that. But one scents the danger that, precisely because the villagers pay half the cost village-halls may be reckoned of much less importance than schemes for which the Government pays all. In the prodigious national budget, an annual grant of, say, £500,000 for such a purpose looks trivial. In the eyes of the person for whom size is the sign of significance, its very modesty may prove it to be one of the frills, which can be snipped off without damage or protest.

In the mid-nineteenth century it would have been difficult to disentangle the various threads in the bond of compulsion which took the villager to Church: to-day it is easier. One part was habit or tradition, one part community impulse, one part genuine deference to the parson as an educated man, one part straight fear of the economic consequences of being out with the rectory, and one part simple religious faith. The proportions in which these elements were mixed, varied from village to village, mainly according to the character of the parson. But in combination they were compulsive; they brought the villagers to Church. All these motives are weakened now, and the most powerful of them all—fear of the economic consequences—is completely destroyed. For the most part the villagers no longer go to Church, except on occasions peculiarly their own—weddings and funerals and harvest-festivals. But this does not mean that the village is less religious than it was. It never was very religious in the specialized and theological sense. Now that the extra-religious compulsions are removed, and the community impulse can find satisfaction in other ways, what remains of the specialized religious belief is too weak to take them to Church. A few of the elderly women go regularly; but the younger and able-bodied men very rarely indeed.

What eventually will happen to the Church in the countryside, I have no idea. Its vitality and influence are still dwindling. But I believe it to be true that, wherever there is still a resident parson, the Church can be and generally is a real blessing to the village. Provided the parson has enough imagination and sympathy to be the guide, philosopher and friend of all who seek his advice and help, regardless of whether they come to church or not, he does a beneficent and invaluable work, Christian and humane. The more fully he accepts the fact that the village church is no longer the central and compulsive institution that it was, the freer he will be from unmerited depression, and the more able to identify himself with movements which, though lacking ecclesiastical affiliation, are yet movements for the common good.

Of these the most important is that for village-halls, or community centres, as they are officially, but too self-consciously, called. They can do no harm to the Church, as it really is : which is not the same as it sometimes pretends to be. It is more than possible that, in the long run, they may do it good. At least an imaginative Christianity would understand them as instruments for doing what the Church—if, by an impossibility, it had retained the power and the resources and the religious attractiveness it used to have—would be constrained to do : namely, to reawaken the sense of community. The radical social change from the old unconscious and hierarchical to the new conscious and democratic community is one of the most difficult that is possible to imagine. On the national scale, we are just beginning to be aware of how difficult it is, and how serious are the possibilities of disaster. The attempt to put Christianity into practice—for that is what it comes to—makes demands on men for which they are ill-prepared. The sudden advent of the new “community” of the semi-socialized welfare State puts the demand in a form least calculated to evoke a willing response. The State is horribly abstract and remote from the human experience of the ordinary man. It is more



liable to arouse repugnance than affection in him—at least indifference rather than loyalty.

Agriculture has resisted the tendency to concentration which is characteristic of modern industry, and is likely to resist it. The economic arguments for abolishing the existing pattern of agriculture are doctrinaire, in essence totalitarian, and entirely unconvincing. Almost every one in the countryside accepts the necessity of increased production, and almost every one knows that the only way to get it is to leave the basic pattern alone. Therefore, the healthy life of the village is more important to the country than ever before—more important, even, than in the days when Britain was an entirely agricultural and self-supporting country. Agriculture underwent its necessary concentration, from open fields into enclosed farms, at the very beginning of the industrial era. The country paid a heavy price for it in the reduction of the agricultural labourer to the status of a virtual serf during the greater part of the nineteenth century. Now, the farm worker is, at long last, coming into his own as an independent being. If the agricultural pattern is to be worked effectively, if the best is to be got out of an organization of the land which, on the whole, is about as good as it could be, it can only be by his willing co-operation. That means, in the not very long run, that he must be taken into conscious and responsible partnership in the work of the farm. It means, too, that the other conditions of village-life must become such that neither he nor his wife is eager to exchange them for those of the city. But it does *not* mean that the brassy, mass-manufactured amenities of the city must be thrust upon the village. There are essential services of the new civilization that the countryman must have, and should have had long ago—cheap electricity, piped water. But he does not want a cinema round the corner. He is quite capable of amusing himself, and of believing, very stubbornly, that his own way of life, his own participation in the rural and personalized community, is substantially better than anything the city can offer. There is coming into being

a new class of countrymen who will be aware of their blessings, and who will be willing to work together to increase them. The duty of the country clerisy—by which I mean every educated and imaginative man or woman who lives in the country—is to help the new, conscious, willed rural community into self-knowledge and more abundant life.

I even believe that the rural community can offer the rest of the country the pattern of the good life in the future. It suffered grievously, first by the enclosures (which marked a vital economic advance), and then by the lop-sided industrialism of the nineteenth century, which let the land go hang. Those were two cruel and crushing blows against the independent spirit of the farm-worker. Yet it is astonishing how much of decency, fellowship and loyalty has survived in him. It is not, perhaps, very visible on the surface; and the townsman who comes to civilize a village will probably be disappointed at the response. But if he has enough imagination to understand that the countryman has learned not to wear his heart upon his sleeve, and patience enough to absorb the fundamentally different life-rhythm of the country, he can bide his time with confidence. If the heaven he has to bring is good, if it is made out of as faithful an experience of life as comes to the countryman, it will be slow in working, but it will work: the flour is honest flour, and the loaf will keep. The countryman has a deep-rooted morality of his own. Deal fairly and honourably with the land and he will respect you. Grow a better field of corn than the village has seen since old man Banham's day, and the village will share your satisfaction—naturally, your own men first, but the triumph belongs to the village also. Restore and improve your buildings, the village will take pride in them. The time will come when you will feel yourself subtly sustained by this silently working spirit of community.

It is tongue-tied, but it is real and potent. It is determined to find fuller expression, to correspond with the new margin

of freedom that the countryman has won. The spirit of the old village-community, one feels, was merely forced underground by the two great hardships of enclosure and uncontrolled industrialism. Now it is ready to emerge, and is emerging again, in new forms which it will create for itself. The most any of us can do to help is a humble job of midwifery. It seems to me, essentially, a Christian job: equally, it is a job of obvious national importance. It is a matter of indifference which way you look at it; on the other hand, it is significant that you can look at it either way, and it is still the same job.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

### “COSMO”

“HE was a strangely unintegrated person, a jangle of warring personalities which never reached a working agreement among themselves. The prelate, the courtier, the priest, the actor, the man who had a fondness for society and the man who was nearly a mystic, the sentimentalist, the cynic, the ascetic, the tender and sympathetic counsellor, the lover of flowers and scenery—all were there.” That is how Mr. Lockhart sums up his subject<sup>1</sup> on his last page. Is it a just characterization? A reviewer who knew Lang only in his last years, and then only slightly, and who otherwise had no opportunity to be more than a distant observer, can hardly be in a position to say. He has no genuinely independent yardstick to apply, but must rely for the most part on what Mr. Lockhart himself tells him—and on what Mr. Lockhart so substantially quotes from the autobiographical “jottings” with which Lang had at intervals occupied himself in later life. Judged by this internal standard, it must be said that not all the epithets in the above-quoted summary are quite well chosen. “Nearly a mystic” surely goes beyond any evidence here presented; “cynicism” appears in these pages as no more than a

<sup>1</sup> *Cosmo Gordon Lang* by J. G. Lockhart. Hodder and Stoughton, 1949. Pp. xii+481. £1 5s. od. net.

spice ; and " the love of flowers and scenery " as hardly greater than one observes in half one's neighbours.

Otherwise, however, this summary characterization represents exactly the impression we receive from the book as a whole. The reader is left in no doubt concerning Lang's remarkable gifts. Here was one who would have risen to real eminence in many different walks of life. As an orator in the grand style who could " think on his feet " and rise to great eloquence without any loss of precision in statement, as a master of assemblies, as a shrewd judge of men and affairs, as a skilful mediator between contending parties, as a tireless and conscientious worker who neglected no detail of his vast responsibility, he can have been matched by very few of his contemporaries. But it must be confessed that the memoir hardly leaves upon us the impression of true greatness of soul. Nothing is more often insisted on than that Lang not only had something of the actor in him but also habitually dramatized himself and his own career. It was perhaps unfair of Mr. Lockhart to print the long imaginary entry in *Who's Who* which Lang composed for himself when he had hardly attained his teens, just as it seems unkind to have flourished as the frontispiece the " proud, prelati cal and pompous " portrait of the well-known Hensley Henson story (which I remember William Temple amusedly recounting to me as we stood together before the portrait itself in Bishopthorpe). Yet, as he unfolds his story, Mr. Lockhart far too often finds himself having to apologize for, or to explain away, what looks like conscious pride of place, or assumption of dignity, or desire for remembrance by posterity, on Lang's part. No doubt some of these foibles may be the last infirmities of many noble minds, but it is more disappointing to meet them in a Christian leader than in a statesman, a soldier or a man of letters. No doubt also many worthy men whom we know suffer from such petty forms of self-centredness, but on the other hand there are many who are self-effacing even to a fault. It is perhaps rather more disturbing to find Lang's biographer having so



often to excuse the appearance of snobbery, of favouring the company of the "socially prominent". And surely Mr. Lockhart's phrases about "the poor Scots boy who made good" and the "obscure youth from Glasgow reaching such remote and shining heights", however well meant as an explanation, are considerably overdrawn. There have been many such poor and obscure Scots boys, but Lang was hardly one of them. His youth was spent among cultured and not too impecunious gentlefolk in the Morningside manse of Edinburgh (which stands at the end of the very street in which this review is being written) and the Barony manse of Glasgow; from which leading parishes his father was soon afterwards to go to Aberdeen as Vice-Chancellor of the University. Nor do his biographer's frequent apologies for the lessening of his interest in his own family make entirely pleasant reading. "With his mother alone," we are told, "the old relationship endured to the day of her death. If the others henceforth have little place in the story, it is because they had, it must be owned, little place in his life." Difference of ecclesiastical affiliation may have had something to do with this. "For a long time," he wrote in later life, "I had known that if ever I were to identify myself with the Anglican Church it would be on its Catholic side. Why else would any such step be worth while, for with all that's best on the evangelical side I had been familiar since childhood." Yet his father had the reputation of being "High Church" in the milder sense which could alone be given to that phrase within the Church of Scotland—a sense, no doubt, very different from Hensley Henson's when he wrote to Lang on his elevation to the Archbishopric of York, "I'm sorry, of course, very sorry, that you are so stiff a High Churchman."

There is, however, another prominent side of Lang's complex personality that must greatly impress the reader of this biography—his continual contrite sense of his own shortcoming, his solemn sense of responsibility before God, his instancy in prayer, his delight in such periods of prayerful

retreat as he could snatch and protect from the counter-claims of external affairs. Of the genuineness of his inner life we are left in no doubt, and one has the feeling that but for a strong element of reserve in his own references to such things, the impression left would be still greater. Moreover every reader will be struck by the story of his remarkable decision to put aside his long-standing ambitions of a political and legal career, at a time when the prospects were so brilliant, in order to seek ordination; and by his early preference for, and success in, work among the poorer classes of the population in Leeds, Portsea, and Stepney. Here also was a man who, throughout an unusually long period of high office, did his duty very faithfully according to the light given him. Were there many others, in his own or any other Church, who could, all things considered, have done it better, or even as well?

It is only when we compare Lang with those few churchmen of recent times who had in them some element of real greatness that his limitations are apt to intrude themselves, and perhaps such a comparison is as ungenerous as it is unnecessary. He was neither thinker nor reformer, nor could he give any strong lead to the Church in his time. It is frequently said in these pages that "his service to Christian unity was his greatest contribution to the Church". Yet this service was less definitive than William Temple's, whose ecumenical interest was perhaps of a different kind. Lang's work for reunion, as here described, seems mainly to have been concerned with "establishing a new and closer relationship" between the Church of England and "the Old Catholics, the Orthodox and some of the Scandinavian Churches". One can fully sympathize with the desire of Anglicans to find some other Churches, in places however distant, with whom they can be in communion, but the infinitely more urgent problem is that Christians who live in one place—in the same country, in the same village, in the same household, sharing one another's lives—should be in communion with one another. Towards this great end Lang

had apparently no strong lead to give, though he did not a little to advance co-operative action, for certain limited purposes, among the Christian Churches of this country.

There is one correction that is worth making. In connection with the conversations of the early thirties between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland it is stated on page 370 that "the meetings came abruptly to an end" when in 1933 the General Assembly of the latter Church carried Dr. Fleming's addendum by a narrow majority (actually a majority of 13 in a vote of 751). Very much the same thing is said on page 462 of the Dean of Lichfield's *William Temple*. But the facts seem slightly different. However unfortunate the said addendum may be considered to have been, it did not prevent the Joint Committee of the two Churches from issuing a full and apparently unanimous report in the following year, nor did it prevent the General Assembly of 1934 from receiving that report and approving the "recommendations contained in the Joint Statement of Agreements". Furthermore the Upper Houses of the Canterbury and York Convocations received the report in January, 1935, and commended it "to the sympathetic and careful study of the Church" of England. At the same time, however, the Lower House of Canterbury decided to pass no resolution in the matter until the Episcopal Church in Scotland had had an opportunity "of expressing a corporate opinion upon the proposals". In May of that same year the bishops of the Episcopal Church in Scotland issued a statement in which they voiced their serious difficulties on the questions of mutual admission to pulpits and admission of communicants of either Communion to the ordinances of the other. In May, 1936, the Lower House of Canterbury considered this statement; on 28th July, the Rev. Alan C. Don wrote on Lang's behalf to Principal Curtis announcing the result; and on 6th February, 1937, Lang finally wrote to Dr. John White that in view of this result "the Conferences may now be regarded as closed". The relevant documents are all printed in the Bishop of Chichester's

*Documents on Christian Unity: Third Series*, and the correspondence is printed in *Reports to the General Assembly*, 1937.

I have one personal recollection of Lang which I have never quite been able to interpret. It so happened that at the opening meeting of the Life and Work Conference in Oxford in 1937, Lang was in the chair and it was my duty to say some prayers. Before entering the Sheldonian Theatre, where the meeting was held, I told Lang that it had been suggested to me that I include a prayer for Martin Niemoeller who was then in prison. "It might help him," I said. But the Archbishop replied, "And it might bring about his death." The prayer was not said. But I wonder.

JOHN BAILLIE.

## HUMAN RELATIONS IN INDUSTRY TO-DAY

### A MANAGEMENT VIEW

PERHAPS the outstanding feature of industry at the present time is the widespread interest in and concern for the "human factor" which has developed since 1939. For many years before the war there were firms and individuals active in this field, but it must be admitted that, so long as there was a large pool of unemployed and no compelling demand for production in quantity, industry in general was not interested nor prepared to go to much trouble and expense to study human problems or to provide for them as seriously as for manufacturing, administrative and marketing problems. The War and the post-war economic crisis have changed the situation. With full employment, and with the need for high production at low cost, management has been compelled to search for other methods than the threat of dismissal to ensure discipline and a responsible attitude to work—otherwise, management has just drifted, weakly deploring the irresponsibility of human nature. The problem has been further complicated by the fact that, with the



absence from the shops of so many desirable goods, the incentive of high earnings has been weakened. Interest in the human aspects of industry also received further impetus during the war, and for a year or two after, from the wave of social idealism of which the result of the 1945 General Election was the political expression.

In many respects most encouraging progress has been made on the "human" side of industry, and something has been done to hasten the obstinately slow process of extending to industry generally the thought and practice of the leading firms. Many firms are still, however, virtually untouched by this movement, apart from compliance with its legislative results, such as amendments and additions to the Factory Acts, the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, and so on.

There is a hard core of industry (notably in the older industries) where these modern developments are regarded as "new-fangled", as "pampering the workers", and as "frills" which will have to disappear now that the post-war "honeymoon" period is over. It is in this section of industry that one most frequently finds a nostalgia for pre-war industrial conditions, a disillusionment and cynicism about human nature, and a corresponding limpness and lack of imagination in dealing with it. It is here that the conviction is most firmly entrenched that good discipline and hard work will never be achieved until a measure of unemployment returns and the threat of dismissal becomes fully effective again. There is no escaping the fact that irresponsibility, a minimum of work for a maximum of pay, indiscipline and so on are all too common in industry to-day and that sanctions of some kind are necessary. But it is only to be expected that, where the conviction that there is no other side to the picture is so strong, examples to "prove" this case are much readier to hand than those which at least point in the opposite direction. For it is characteristic of human relations that what you expect from a man to some extent determines what you get. Where

a factory community is judged by its most irresponsible members and handled accordingly, the general standard of responsibility is correspondingly lowered, and the good which is mixed in varying degrees with the bad in most people is never drawn out and cultivated at all—to the real loss of management itself.

Slow as the improvement has been in a considerable section of industry, the general picture shows some advance. It is proposed to indicate briefly the main directions it is taking in progressive firms, and to deal with two tendencies at somewhat greater length.

First, the importance of the human qualities of the manager is being increasingly recognized. We are moving away from the day when a man's promotion to supervisory responsibility was dependent almost entirely on his technical knowledge and ability. Secondly, the practice of Joint Consultation has become far more widely established than it was before the war. It has been accepted in progressive firms that both efficiency and "morale" are raised when the worker's interest in the wider aspects of his job and in the affairs of the factory has been gained and his contribution of ideas secured.

Thirdly, the development of Personnel Management out of the earlier idea of Welfare has assisted industry to give expression in practice to the new thinking about the human factor. Its main contribution to human relations has been to encourage a more orderly, scientific and consistent handling of the human aspects of management.

Fourthly, there is now far more interest in, and attention given to, proper training for the job. Where this has made most progress, training is seen in an educational setting. A number of the larger firms have appointed Education Officers, and contacts which are valuable from many points of view have been developing between schools, technical colleges, universities and the teaching profession on the one hand and industry on the other. Apart from its purely educational aspects, sound and comprehensive training is

proving of particular value by helping the new employee to settle more quickly into the factory community. Provided the danger of indoctrination with an uncritical attitude towards management is recognized and deliberately avoided, such training encourages mutual understanding and respect between workers and management.

Lastly, there has been steady progress in the extension of welfare services—sports and social amenities, canteens, medical services, etc. What is more important for sound human relations, however, is that industry is rapidly outgrowing the old-fashioned idea of "Welfare". Evidence of this is that the term "Employee Services" is increasingly taking the place of "Welfare" with its heavily paternalistic associations. The Unions have always mistrusted welfare as they feel it is too often provided by the employer with an eye at least to "keeping the workers quiet" and diverting attention from injustices. They feel also that it tends too easily to give the employer a hold over the private life of the employee. Another criticism of welfare schemes of this type is that there is a strong tendency for them to be "laid on" as charity (in the bad sense) and in such a way as to discourage responsibility and initiative on the part of the recipients. There is no doubt, however, that employee services, provided and organized in a mature and adult way, can be a valuable contribution to the life of a factory. At the same time, it is recognized in many leading firms to be wrong from the point of view of the wider community in the locality for people to allow their leisure time and activities to centre solely in the community and environment of the factory.

Let us now examine further the first two points of advance in industrial thinking, namely, the importance of the human qualities in the manager and the growth of Joint Consultation. Both are growing points of some significance to the social development of industrial life.

As we have seen, so long as there was widespread unemployment, management could get along tolerably well with-

out worrying much about the human qualities of its supervisors. Most of industry, however, had no idea how much it was losing, in terms of hard cash alone, through neglecting the "social skill" of its supervision at all levels. This is not to say that by any means all supervisors lacked social skill—far from it, but it tended to be too much a matter of chance. Absenteeism, labour turnover, indiscipline and bad workshop relations, leading to inefficiency and waste—all these cost industry money, and they are all aggravated where supervision lacks the qualities of fairness, human understanding, imagination, enthusiasm and moral courage—all, indeed, that is implied in the word leadership. And how often has industry, by looking only at technical skill when appointing a supervisor, lost a good craftsman and made a bad foreman?

This situation was partly responsible for an atmosphere of bad workshop relations and deep mistrust of management's intentions which has been too common in industry. In the last decade a change has been taking place. Many experiments have been made to find methods of selecting potential managers which will bring to light the human qualities of the candidates. Systematic training of men for executive positions is also increasing, and is aimed at developing personality and the capacities for leadership as much as technical competence. These developments have been accompanied by an even more widespread interest in the selection and training of foremen and junior supervisors generally. Foremen's conferences, residential and non-residential training courses for foremen, and lectures on "Foremanship" within the individual factory have all become increasingly common. The Ministry of Labour's course of "Training Within Industry for Supervisors" (in spite of being shunned by some firms as the thin end of the nationalization wedge!) has contributed substantially to the whole movement; and it is interesting to note that the part of the course aimed at developing the supervisor's skill in handling human beings has been adapted for use by the



Trade Unions in the training of their Shop Stewards. The effect of all this is that the supervision and leading of people in industry is being approached increasingly in a thought-out and well-informed way, instead of by mere emotion and instinct.

Basically, though few supervisors would express it so, it is a movement towards the treatment of people in industry as "persons" instead of as "hands", and towards the full acceptance by management of its responsibility of leadership. The movement has, of course, been regarded in some quarters as "molly-coddling", "pampering the workers", and so on. There is, however, an important difference between pampering, which is "doing good to people" who need do no more than accept it passively, and leadership, the whole object of which is to secure active co-operation, to give responsibility and to encourage initiative. Human relations in much of industry have suffered in the past from the fact that, while there may have been little pampering, leadership has been absent too.

The system of joint committees known as Joint Consultation has come as near to being an industrial craze as any idea in the last twenty years. It is not surprising, therefore, that in spite of its value in principle and the successes it has achieved, it has suffered some fairly hard knocks in encountering the realities of industrial relations as they have reasserted themselves since the war. Basically, its purpose is three-fold. First, it is an opportunity for management to inform those responsible to it (whether junior management or actual bench workers) of progress and development, and particularly of proposed changes in policy or plans which will affect them. Secondly, Joint Consultation provides an opportunity for those further down the line to make suggestions, to raise problems and grievances and to ask for information. Thirdly, it is an opportunity for discussion of their joint problems by both supervisors and supervised.

This is not the place to give a detailed account of the various forms of Joint Consultation. There is only space

for one or two comments on its influence. First, such consultation, where it has got beyond the stage of canteen complaints and clean towels in cloakrooms, has been a new and somewhat difficult experience for both management and workers. Management has not been used to the regular passing-on of information on progress and policy, nor to explaining why it has reached certain decisions, nor to accepting suggestions for improvements in the sphere of management and production from the man at the bench. The latter, for his part, is now called upon to make responsible suggestions that have to bear examination and discussion in committee with management, as opposed to merely putting forward complaints, claims and demands which management may or may not discuss with him or his representatives before giving a decision. (One of the valuable aspects of Joint Consultation has been the insight into the responsibilities, functions and problems of management which has been afforded to the ordinary worker and the part it has given him in shaping the affairs of the works as a whole, as well as those of his own department.)

Another experience that is new for most workers is that of helping to increase output and efficiency in the national, as well as the firm's, interest. Too often before 1939, to increase output was to work yourself out of a job more quickly; and to make a labour-saving suggestion which reduced costs might throw a mate out of a job and "put more money in the boss's pocket". Small wonder then that the worker often approaches Joint Consultation with instinctive hesitation and mistrust, wondering what, on the long view, he is letting himself in for.

The same lack of initiative and unwillingness to take responsibility, of which there are complaints on all sides to-day, naturally hinders the functioning of Joint Consultation. The more, therefore, that management deliberately develops initiative and responsible action and the less it treats docility as a virtue, the more effective will joint consultation be. This is anything but a prescription for a quiet life for

management, but it is the only way forward towards sound and mature industrial relations.

It has been inevitable, therefore, that Joint Consultation should have many prejudices and difficulties to overcome, and that much patience and realism should be required before it could begin to make headway in many places, particularly where relations have been bad in the past. Recognition of the realities of industrial relations is as important as anything. One suspects that Joint Consultation has often come to grief (literally!) in the past because it has been organized on the assumption that this was the way to do away with the "two sides" in industry, instead of as one way of enabling the "two sides" to work together.

Finally, it is plain that the effect of Joint Consultation on an organization is related not only to the sense of responsibility and willingness to co-operate on the workers' side, but also to the human qualities displayed by management. On the one hand, qualities of leadership will enable Joint Consultation to contribute a great deal in both efficiency and sound human relations in the organization; but on the other hand, where management is bankrupt of leadership, an attempt to introduce formal Joint Consultation may well make relationships considerably worse than they were before. It then becomes a lens through which much of the ill-feeling in the factory passes and is magnified. As one of the foremost authorities on industrial relations in this country has remarked, "Joint Consultation is too dangerous a tool to entrust to a management which lacks social skill."

This article has been confined largely to an examination of the influence of the new concern for the human factor upon workshop relations. It cannot do justice to the wider issues of formal industrial relations as between employers and Trade Unions, which also have their effect on relations on the shop floor. One or two points are, however, worth noting in conclusion.

The keynote of official industrial relations during and since the war has been co-operation (largely on a tri-partite

basis through Government) on a scale unknown before the war. The common tasks of the war, reconstruction and now the economic crisis have meant that community of interest has on the whole been greater than the conflicts of interest inherent in our present industrial system. How far this co-operation would survive such possibilities as the return of a Conservative Government at the General Election, a collapse of the T.U.C.'s courageous policy of restraint of wage claims, or a recession of trade with a return of widespread unemployment, is anybody's guess. An increase in the number of unofficial and the occurrence of some official strikes is more than likely. Should this situation develop, progress in the conduct of works relations such as we have described would certainly be made much more difficult. Nevertheless, where progress hitherto has been based on realism about man and about the social groups to which he belongs and whose interests influence his judgments and actions, it is unlikely that much ground would be lost.

A. P. FORRESTER-PATON.

## INDUSTRY and HUMANISM

Two little books are here under review. The first, *Ideals and Industry*,<sup>1</sup> brings together some notes which the late Mr. Samuel Courtauld published in the *Economic Journal* in April 1942, and some talks he gave in the two succeeding years. The notes treat of what in 1942 was called industrial reconstruction, while the talks, evoked by the interest aroused by the notes, have a similar subject-matter, though the thoughts expressed in them, as the author of the introduction observes, are of a "more mature and positive character". The second book is by Dr. Tredgold, who is a psychiatrist, and it is called *Human Relations in Modern Industry*.<sup>2</sup> It is based on a series of lectures on the same subject which were given at Roffey Park Rehabilitation Centre in 1947 and 1948.

<sup>1</sup> *Ideals and Industry*, by the late Samuel Courtauld (Cambridge University Press, 10s. 6d.).

<sup>2</sup> *Human Relations in Modern Industry*, by R. F. Tredgold (Duckworth, 8s. 6d.).



A great industrialist and a great patron of the arts, after nearly seventy years of a life that had not recklessly been given over to the making of speeches, could not fail to have matter of interest to impart.

"The Parthenon is not only beautiful because of the perfect marriage of stone and structure; it is also beautiful because it is planned with subtle lines and measurements which are wholly non-utilitarian, and whose only aim is to counteract certain deceptive impressions of the eye and add to visual harmony.

"The spirit of the Baroque makes its great appeal because it demonstrates that man can afford to ignore functional laws in his search to create non-utilitarian beauty.

"Like religion, art is *not* the servant of utility, and whether mental and spiritual values happen to coincide with material values or to run counter to them *is not of supreme importance.*"

These words would be evidence of the depth of Courtauld's esthetic sensibility, even if his deeds had not already given the proof they have. But the peculiar flavour of Courtauld's mind is given rather on those occasions when he takes in his esthetic and industrial experience in a single glance, and condemns those who would "clean the slate and hand it over to engineers and cost accountants for them to draw what is most appropriate from their fleeting economic point of view".

Beauty was not an inessential ornament to be added to the products of industry; nor was it, as some have pretended, an inevitable by-product of utility truly followed. Beauty had to be recognized because one could not be a man if one did not recognize it and give its commands a certain obedience. "Man is the non-economic animal," the only one. That is the central statement of Courtauld's humanism. From it might be deduced such applications as this: "administrators of all grades need a really wide type of general education. They must learn history, the humanities, perhaps the classics. For them the learning of industrial 'technique' is of secondary importance." Or this: that materialism could destroy us "and not leave us any business to discuss". In his view of the working population, Courtauld showed great generosity and some shrewdness but he was, after all, insulated by great position and great wealth, and he is often little more illuminating than any other employer of what were still, in 1942, "advanced views." In his youth, Courtauld says, he tried to make the older generation of employers "see that they and their workpeople were one class, and not two", but that, after all, was not true; and "to make them realize and appreciate the workers' outlook as keenly as their own", but that is not possible. Courtauld's belief "that there is . . . to-day . . . less selfishness . . . than ever before", even his "faith in

human nature and faith in the future", belong to the same cloudy world that the employer now likes to, or has to, inhabit. "It is impracticable to ignore humanity to-day," Courtauld says somewhere, without irony. Elsewhere he says: "The typical nineteenth-century employer in the heyday of early expansion" canonized his "business principles . . . under the name of economic laws". The twentieth-century employer, it might be added, canonizes his principles of labour management under the title of a moral progressiveness, when he does not employ expressions more "scientific"—and more barbaric.

A humanism such as Courtauld displayed is an individual gift and an acquisition; it is the product, moreover, of that "certain amount of wealth and leisure" which is "still needed to keep culture alive", and which is the privilege of fewer every year and must probably be regarded as vestigial. With Dr. Tredgold's book we are, so to speak, in the second half of the twentieth century. The odd juxtaposition, under the chapter headings, of quotations from Confucius and C. Reavely, Solon and May Smith, are no doubt meant to demonstrate how science might show "that old moral standards had much practical value", whatever that may mean; they also bear witness to a culture grown thin and poor. What an ingenuous if disappointed "progressiveness" is uncovered by such a sentence as this: "it is a sobering reflection that the views expressed by Plato over 2,300 years ago are still as revealing as a modern exposition of the subject." Those are words from a generation to whom not much has been handed down; from one that has lost its sense of depth. Those who, practising a technique of "mental first aid" recommended by Dr. Tredgold, "blushed for shame," may have done so because certain traditional modes of judgment were still alive in them. And in what sort of society does one sit down with pencil and paper to list and number "the essential qualities of leadership"? . . . These indications do not reflect on Dr. Tredgold; they are the symptoms of an epidemic disease. And because "ideas in a speech . . . even by a psychiatrist", may often be found "expressed rather more concisely in Plato, or in the Bible", it may be that the great need of the age is more study of ideas at their sources rather than in derivative forms. That might bring us nearer the world of "Holy Living" and the "Serious Call" than to "Human Relations".

C. H. Sisson.



